TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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No. 80
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Toward a More Creative Observance of Rural Life Sunday

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OF RELIGION

DALE W. MEDEARIS

• Not long ago I telephoned a city pastor to ask what his experience had been in connection with the observance of Rural Life Sunday. After some hesitation, he said that the only fruit had been a case of nostalgia. "The folks like to recall the good old days," he said, "when their parents took them to church in the spring wagon and laid them down in the aisles on quilts to sleep while the preacher droned on into the night. But, aside from this emotional excursion into the dead past, little comes from the observance."

Realistic Approach

This city preacher went on to plead for a more realistic approach to such a special day. He said, "if you are going to continue to promote the observance of Rural Life Sunday, give us something to do that will have some meaning for the day in which we live. Give us a project or something that will serve as a handle by which we can get hold of our rural-urban relationships in a significant way."

Such a challenge made me think about the whole affair more seriously than I had ever thought before. I think I know why he feels the way he does, for I feel somewhat the same way. Furthermore, I think we can and should do something about it.

Common Concern

Rural Life Sunday need not be a mere emotional excursion into the past. Neither need it be a mere morale booster for the present. It can and should be an occasion when both rural and urban people recognize the needs of the hour which give common concern.

Protestant churches have not been fully aware of the exodus of great masses of people from the countryside to the city. To be sure, rural churches have realized that they were losing members, but somehow they have been able to shut their eyes to the real tragedy. In turn, the city churches have been vaguely aware that people were flowing into the city but they have not fully realized the significance of it all.

Attending Problems

We are beginning to realize that serious social and economic problems attend the moving of so great a segment of our population each year. We are beginning to see the potentialities of this group and their needs.

The rural-to-urban migrant is usually between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four, hunting for economic security and a start in life not available to him in the country or the small town. (This applies particularly to women because rural America offers less gainful employment to women than to men.)

Upon arrival in the city, the rural-to-urban migrant may settle in a zone of disorganization—the no-man's land of the city where he is surrounded by cheap hotels, beer joints and gambling establishments. He is socially unstable due to the fact that he may vascilate between the city and the rural areas for several seasons before deciding to stick to one or the other.

The age, place of residence, and social instability of the rural-to-urban migrant makes him easy picking for those who are in business to exploit and corrupt other human beings. America loses many useful and creative citizens in this way.

Adjustment

These characteristics present some very serious problems to the church. By checking some of the "conservation reports" from my denomination, one gets the general impression that the ratio of those who have been disassociated with the church by their move runs pretty high. Something, certainly, is causing Protestant

churches to lose a high percentage of their gains every year. In my own mind, I am satisfied that this loss is not entirely due to poor preparation for church membership or the dearth of denominational indoctrination.

The rural-to-urban migrant has not found the rural church to be a very good ally in his struggle for adjustment to urban life. Quite often his home church has refused to accept the fact that he was moving to town permanently. When approached by the city church about a transfer of his membership, too often the rural church maintains a stony silence or says, "stop trying to steal our members." As a result, non-resident rolls have grown like Jack's famous bean stalk until some of them quite exceed the roll of resident members.

But, then, he hasn't found a much better ally in the city church. It is indeed a saddening experience to observe the almost utter obliviousness of the urban church to the migration of rural people and their problems of adjustment. It is little wonder that rural people can move to the city from a strong church background and become thoroughly discouraged.

Handles

There are certain things that both the rural and urban churches can do to aid rural-to-urban migrants in their problems of adjustment.

The rural church can prove to be a "friend in need" by facing the situation more creatively. Rather than emotionalizing "the good earth" or becoming nostalgic about the "little brown church in the wildwood" and the "cemetery where Aunt Minnie lies sleeping," it would be considerably more helpful for the church to inaugurate a program that would aid in relating the moving member to a church in his new community. The rural church can make the occasion of transfer of membership more significant with farewell parties and the giving of letters of introduction to the urban church. And it can make the occasion of Rural Life Sunday one of rejoicing over satisfactory adjustment on the part of former members to life in the city.

Stark, N. H.

Photograph by A. Devaney, N. Y.

The urban church can also prove to be a "friend in need." It can and should do everything possible to acquaint itself with the problems of new people in the parish. It can be friendlier to these people and let it be known that it is available for counsel and guidance. It can let it be known that it has a deep concern for rural-to-urban migrants and that it will welcome information from rural communities concerning them. And it can set up some kind of "operation housing" to aid in the location of adequate housing in a good environment for the migrants.

I think I have pointed out some handles for both rural and urban churches to take hold of on Rural Life Sunday. No longer do we need to weep about the past or indulge in nostalgic remembrances. We have a great challenge before us. We have a great common concern. Let's tackle it with all the strength we can muster.

Next Issue

• The next issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH will be dated September 1952. We publish nine times a year.

The 1952 Convocation

• The ninth National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held this year at Columbus, Ohio, October 29-31.

The Convocation is held annually under the auspices of The Department of the Town and Country Church of the Division of Home Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

The conference brings together those most interested in the rural church for exchange of ideas on new techniques. They worship together, inspire and educate each other, and make plans and recommendations as they confront the rural community.

Ministers of town and country churches, church administrators, officers of rural community agencies, and all others who are interested in the town and country church are cordially invited to attend this year's Convocation.

The program of the 1952 Convocation and detailed information regarding registration and housing will be published in the September issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH. Many of the denominational home mission boards will distribute programs.

Lutheran Award for 4-H Club Members

• The Lutheran churches of America are interested in the values of the 4-H Club program. A committee of the youth leaders of various national synods have been at work for some time, with the assistance of several county, state and national 4-H leaders, developing a program for giving church recognition to 4-H members for outstanding service through their club work.

This church recognition will center in a medal to be known as the "God-Home-Country" church award for 4-H members. It is given for outstanding achievement and service rendered to the local congregation, and outstanding achievement in 4-H work and services rendered to the community. It is presented to the club member personally by his pastor in a worship service of his congregation. The club leader and other members of the club are encouraged to be present.

In order to win this award, a boy or girl must have been a 4-H member for not less than three years and have complete reports of 4-H projects carried out; or must have been a regular member for the time required for junior leadership and must have been a junior leader or an assistant for at least one year with reports as required in 4-H work.

In addition to the regular 4-H project reports, the candidate is asked to review in a special report how he has given service to his own home, club, or community through his 4-H activities and projects, including livestock, poultry, crops, conservation, foods, clothing, etc. This review should cover about 100 hours of service time. Each candidate is also asked to prepare a brief essay on one of his own outstanding experiences in 4-H work.

The "God-Home-Country" church award is granted by a local congregation to the outstanding 4-H member in its congregation. The church thus becomes a cooperator in this youth work and adapts 4-H character-building values to its own program.

Livestock to Korea

• The Heifer Project, interfaith rehabilitation organization, has been given permission to begin shipping hatching eggs and livestock to Korea for rehabilitation purposes.

Although a campaign to provide milking goats for Korean farms has previously been announced, the most immediate need is for hatching eggs, Thurl Metzger, the Project's executive secretary, said. From 300,000 to 500,000 eggs will be needed.

Following the egg shipments, it is hoped that sufficient funds will be in hand to begin shipping goats. Mr. Metzger also indicated that hogs for cross-breeding purposes, would be sent at a later date.

It is planned to have several agricultural experts go along with the eggs and livestock to supervise distribution and properly interpret the gifts from America to the Korean people.

The Heifer Project has already shipped livestock, principally heifers, to twenty-one different nations. Although originated by the Church of the Brethren, the Project is now sponsored by both Protestant and Catholic groups.

Goats in Japan

FAO Faces World Food Situation

JOHN H. REISNER

• The grim fact that the world was losing the battle for food pervaded the atmosphere in which the Sixth Conference Session of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations met in its new home in Rome, November 19 to December 7, 1951. According to the report of the Director-General world population since 1936 has increased thirteen per cent whereas food production increased only nine per cent.

Nutritional levels continue to be very unsatisfactory in vast regions of the world, such as the Far East, the Near East, and Africa which contain three-fifths of the world's population. Increased production since prewar years has been greatest in those countries where nutritional levels had previously been highest.

Documents before the conference showed that production of cereals in underdeveloped regions was no higher in 1950 than two years earlier, and in exporting regions the outlook had declined. With exception of sugar, world output of all commodities in relation to the people to be fed and clothed remains lower than before the war.

On the other hand, the Director-General called attention to the fact that bases for new and substantial progress have been created. Six factors were listed as hopeful of success:

1. The rapidity with which the tremendous devastation of war has been repaired and the high productive capacity of modern economy.

2. There is a growing accumulation of knowledge in the field of agricultural technology. By the application of this knowledge agricultural productivity, both per acre and per man, can be rapidly increased.

3. Governments have made undeniable progress in analyzing their problems and in setting up the necessary administrative machinery.

4. FAO has strengthened itself, not only in its regular program but through the expanded technical assistance program which greatly multiplies its ability to render direct assistance to governments.

5. The most urgent investment needs have been calculated, and studies have been made or are being prepared which outline the actions which must be taken if these needs are to be met.

6. The peoples of underdeveloped countries have become more and more conscious of the unfavorable conditions under which they live, and governments now have the necessary popular support for the measures to be undertaken.

The conference was conscious of the need for more vigorous action at the farm level and called upon all member governments: (a) to establish adequate extension and administrative services on the level of the farmer and linked with local administration and education and with activities of established organizations and institutions; (b) to insure that necessary supplies and equipment for effective administration work are available; (c) to promote where necessary pilot schemes and demonstration areas; and (d) to provide adequate services to insure improvement of home economics in rural areas.

The number of technical assistance experts requested by member countries, and agreed to by FAO, totaled 378. More than fifty per cent of the experts are dealing with immediate problems of agriculture.

—from *Rural Missions*

Saskatchewan Co-ops

• The government of the Canadian province of Saskatchewan has published an annual report of its Co-operative Extension Services. This report is for the twelve-month period preceding March 31, 1951.

The functions of the Division of Co-operative Extension Services are "to provide information and advice to people interested in production co-operatives and any new types; to provide supervision and advice to production co-operatives and any new types after they are incorporated; to assist with organizing and conducting co-operative schools, conferences and study groups; to supervise the department Reference Library and the use of department exhibits; to coordinate the special advisory and educational work of the department with other departments and agencies doing related work."

The production co-operatives are incorporated under The Co-operative Associations Act. This provides a corporate body through which any three or more farmers can conduct jointly such activities as leasing or purchasing land, purchasing equipment and borrowing money needed to achieve their objectives. Thirty-one production co-operatives were incorporated under the Act during the year ending March 31, 1951.

At March 31, 1951, there were twenty-three co-operative farms in the province. This land is held with a thirty-three year renewable lease containing an option of purchase at the end of ten years. The total number of acres owned or leased is approximately 67,000. Although the number of co-operative farms is increasing gradually the development is being held back by lack of available land, lack of a source of long term loans and lack of knowledge or understanding of co-operative farming by the public.

There are co-operatives in this province for the use of farm machinery, for pasture land, fodder, trapping fur-bearing animals, hog production, irrigation, lumber production, livestock, dairy, snow plow, housing and fish marketing.

Since 1937 five-day co-operative schools, held during the first week in July, have been an annual event in the province. At first only one school was held each year. However, the number of young people wishing to attend has increased until co-operative schools are now held at five centers. Last year these were attended by over 400 young people. They were sponsored by local Wheat Pool Committees and co-operatives, which paid most of the expenses.

During the year many Co-operative Rallies and Citizenship Days were held.

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An Effective Rural Church Program*

HENRY S. RANDOLPH

• There is no institution in rural life for the teaching and promotion of the Gospel of our Lord among men other than the Church. If rural folk are to be saved through Christ, it will be due to the vitality and effectiveness of the church program.

The Church must function as a cohesive force in every area and interest of human life. It must provide for the full development and integration of human personality. It must lead the people to accept Jesus as their Lord and to make a personal commitment to the Christian way of life. It must provide adequately for Christian worship, Christian education, Christian fellowship and recreation. It must sponsor righteousness in relation to such matters as home and family life, rural health, race relations, labor and economics, politics, farm and youth organizations.

The Church has done these things here and there and done them superbly, but our work has been all *too spotty.*

The Church and Community

Rural life is moving and changing more rapidly than any other segment of our national population. Our machinery is doing in a few hours what formerly required many days. New methods of plant and animal breeding and scientific methods of cultivation have increased production many times. This has lessened the dependence of rural people on agriculture as a means of livelihood.

Our nonfarm rural population continues to grow rapidly. New populations are coming to the country.

It is therefore important, if the rural church is to build a program to serve its community adequately, that it must understand the changes which are taking place in the community and know the nature of the new rural society which is emerging.

No church has a right to impose itself upon rural society unless it is making a contribution to the enrichment of the human community. Therefore, the program of the rural church must be community-centered rather than communion-centered, built in terms of the basic spiritual needs of the community.

Preaching

What of rural preaching? It has been believed by some that just anyone can preach to rural people. It is assumed that rural people are not well educated, that their experiences are narrow, that the uneducated man can meet their needs from the pulpit. We have even ordained such men to preach the Gospel. This whole assumption is false. The rural man at his best is not illiterate. He is likely to know much more about life and how to live it and much more about the Bible than his city cousin, and he is likely to be far more critical.

You will probably agree with me that Jesus was the most soul-searching preacher the world has ever known. What of his sermons? Father, Son, and Kingdom of God, yes—but illustrated from and by the common daily experiences of rural life. The preacher who will not take time and trouble to discover comparable sermonic material out of the daily experiences of his parishioners today is not fit to preach about the Kingdom of God to rural people. Therefore, preaching out of rural life situations is an essential element in the effective rural church program.

Worship

The selection of Scripture, hymns and prayers used in our worship should likewise be within the context of the rural community. The Bible

* From an address delivered before the National Presbyterian Town and Country Church Conference at Champaign, Illinois, 1951.

as a source book of worship material is a rural book. The living experiences of the people of Bible times should be translated into modern rural experiences.

Evangelism

All of us have multitudes of indifferent and unbelieving people in our parishes. It is the business of the Church to touch these lives effectively for Christ. The Church must speak to them convincingly through every one of its members. Any type of evangelism is made intelligible and effective only through an undergirding by teaching and by well-designed Christian activities for those beginning the Christian life.

Every local church and parish should have an outreach program where it can give itself in immediate service and provide a Christian service laboratory for the membership of the church. This outreach spirit should extend to all peoples of the earth through the missionary arms of the Church.

Christian Education

Our rural people deserve the best we can give them in materials, teaching, organization, and methods of teaching.

The following agencies, and perhaps others, in the community should be recognized, organized, and correlated as Christian educational forces in the parish: (1) the rural family, (2) the Sunday or church school, (3) the vacation church school, (4) weekday school of religion, and (5) communicants' class.

This program of education calls for a leadership training program in every parish: to train Sunday school superintendents, vacation and weekday church school leaders, Sunday school teachers, etc. We now have excellent materials and other ways of achieving this. And it must be done if we are to move into our rightful heritage.

Newspaper Publicity

• "Get your country church in the news, and it will no longer be isolated," writes J. A. Earl in a recent issue of *Shepherds.*

The Rural Church Stabilizes the Home

HAROLD R. MEGILL

• Home-owning farmers are the most stable portion of our population. Their business, their homes and their way of life are all tied to a bit of land that is unmovable, except as top soil is moved by wind and water erosion, or a river current cuts away a farm. But this movability can be controlled, at least partially, by the wise use of human resources. When the church functions as the expression of these home-owning farmers' ideals, corporate worship and social outreach, we have the most stable community in our civilization.

How does a church become a functioning instrument through which a people expresses its ideals and its corporate worship? And how does a people use a church as its vehicle for social action? Furthermore, how does a church, thus functioning, stabilize the homes of the community?

Meeting the Need

To answer the first question: A church becomes the functioning agent for a group of people when the people realize its usability. In other words, the church discovers the community's need and makes itself available to the people for meeting that need. Basically, the need in every community is spiritual. Essentially, the need is God. But the approach toward meeting that need is different in each community. Among all peoples the spiritual need is reached through physical avenues.

In a Kansas community that has deep soil and a considerable measure of prosperity the need may be expressed in a vacuum in the area of cooperative effort, or in leadership for youth, or in a building for social gatherings, or in a credit union to help those who are struggling to get a foothold in the economic world, or in numerous other ways.

In an Ozark community the need may lie in these areas, but in addition one is likely to find also a need for more intelligent expression of worship, and the very rudiments of modern cooperative effort may have to be begun. One will probably meet a pretty serious health problem. But whatever the area of physical need, a Christian knows that the foundation of the need and its crowning cap sheaf are both spiritual.

The Vehicle

The wise church realizes this truth. It secures a minister who likewise sees the vital connection between physical need and spiritual lack. He is a pastor who is available to everyone in the community. But he becomes available and makes his church available only as he has ideas, conceptions, and purposes that grip the imagination and the loyalty of the people of his community. The people, having caught the churches' vision, begin to look about for a tool to use in attaining the desired ends. The church offers itself to the community as that tool. In this way the church becomes the vehicle for the people's social action.

It should be remembered, however, that the whole vision is not seen at once. Now, we are always "seeing through a glass darkly," but as we proceed, the vision becomes clearer. We need some place to apply our efforts so as to go as far as we can see at the present time. The pastor, through his church, offers a handle for all who seek a handhold so as to meet a community need. Corporate worship becomes one of the handles that is offered and accepted. And when corporate worship becomes the means by which people practice vital private worship, the vision becomes effective in leading individuals up the slope of character toward great living.

When the vehicle, which the community uses to meet its known needs, to carry its own social program, travels the high road of character, the community does indeed find itself moving upward toward God. How much crime is never committed because people are absorbed in constructive work! And how many criminals are never made because individuals find pleasure in socially acceptable enterprises! And how many good

things are enjoyed because people are led to use the spiritual resources that so often lie dormant!

Profound Influence

We must now answer the last question: How does a church, functioning like this, stabilize the homes within its constituency? A church, which has become the instrument with which a community moves upward toward more complete living, has a profound effect upon the families of that community. In the first place, the people who live there are quite likely to want to live there. This is a most stabilizing factor in family existence. We live where we like to live, hence we are not restless to move.

Second, such a church is concerned that young people can find opportunity to have homes and a living in the community. This is very vital to the maintenance of family solidarity. When opportunities for famliy life are not available at home, they must be found elsewhere. When these opportunities are found, there are pulls exerted upon relatives and friends to go where jobs are plentiful and homes are available. Even parents sometimes follow their children out of the community.

Also, when a church has furnished the handles for people to grip when they begin to solve community problems, it has furnished something much more valuable than a physical means of expressing human need. The church has actually furnished a means for the feeling of ownership.

When one has held a handle which operates toward some community end, there comes to the handle holder the realization that he has a stake in the outcome of the enterprise. He feels that each is working for the good of all. People do not readily get up and leave their own interests.

Maximum Security

Again, such people belong to the community. There is no security greater than belonging to a group through which one discovers that he likewise belongs to God. To such a person the love of neighbors, family, church and God become an abiding and sustaining force.

Still another stabilizing factor is that personal intimate touch that the spiritual leaders in the church have with the individual and his family. At times of personal and family stress, how open such lives and such homes become to the spiritual leaders! After such a ministry on the part of the church, the family finds itself embedded in the very life of the church.

The forces of God, reaching down through the church, which is the body of Jesus Christ operating in the community, become the unchangeable and unbroken ties that bind families to the church and the community. Such families produce persons of character for which our world stands always in need.

Unifying Force

And last, but not least, the church that offers avenues of living and interacting service to all the members of a family, furnishes the finest projects for family interest.

The church becomes the greatest unifying force in family life. It has a ministry to every member and creates a loyalty in the heart of each one. This interest, activity and loyalty, common to all, make for a stability that is not easily disturbed. The rural church, operating as it does across class lines, has a unique opportunity to become this stabilizing instrument.

—Reprinted, with permission, from *The Telescope-Messenger*

Photograph by Philip Gendreau, N. Y.

The Qualitative Factor in Rural Living

AARON H. RAPKING

• "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And through the ages God continues to work and express Himself through nature in a very realistic way, spreading his beauty lavishly. He works through laws that are related to our total life, our relationship to Himself, to others, and to all of creation.

In the countryside the making of a living and the making of a life blend. Working and worshiping cannot be two separate departments in a normal person's life. It is this close intimate relationship between God, man, land and nature that is one of the biggest factors in giving quality and meaning to rural living as a way of life. In the tilling of the soil, raising of crops, and caring for livestock, God and man work as companions.

In the doing of our every-day tasks Christ is our great example. While in training for the special task assigned Him by His Father, Christ devoted most of His time to working at the carpenter's trade and in doing many other tasks as He shared in the home, neighborhood and community life.

Some one has said that the rural home is the natural habitat for the family. In the rural home, members of the family are interested in the same tasks. It is quite natural for the farm family to share in doing the chores as well as many other tasks on the farm. The sharing of these tasks is a great factor in bringing about a genuine spirit of family loyalty and fellowship.

Love for each other in the family becomes a basis for interpreting and appreciating the implications and meaning of the two great commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, and strength and thy neighbor as thyself."

The spirit of fellowship and comradeship in the rural home extends in rural living into neighborhood and community life. Neighborliness is a big factor in determining the quality in rural living. In the rural neighborhood folks know each other and share with each other in meeting some of their material, social, educational and spiritual needs. In the past, log rollings, corn huskings, wood sawings, barn raisings, and other similar activities have been great factors in determining the quality of neighborhood and community.

Today, in many rural neighborhoods, cooperatives, community refrigerators, and activities being promoted by our organizations, the Agricultural Extension Service, community councils, the public schools, and by our rural churches, are achieving much in giving a distinctive quality to rural living as a way of life.

In the countryside the setting is indeed ideal for varied, interesting and stimulating work, wholesome leisure time activities, healthy and inspiring family life, challenging and captivating and soul-stirring worship programs, helpful and creative neighborhood and community relationships.

In this setting, as the seasons come and go, those who live in daily contact with the great cycle of life, noticing the beauty so marvelously displayed in a thousand ways in God's great out-of-doors, feel like saying with the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

Something very significant happens to the faith, hope, and love of those who dwell in the countryside as they work with God in their daily tasks. In rural life all the essential elements for growth and development tend to combine and cooperate in achieving the purpose of all creation.

A Mexican Prayer

• "O God, pull out of my heart all the weeds and the dry grass and let each hollow be filled with thine own self." *Amen.*

Church Architecture

• A national contest aimed at preparing future ministers to lead a church building or improvement program in a local church is under way, sponsored by the National Council of Churches' Bureau of Church Building and Architecture.

Dr. E. M. Conover, director of the Bureau, said the competition is open only to students in Protestant theological seminaries, and that each contestant is required to select a specific church and prepare a building program which he believes is needed. An alternative is to plan a completely new church, he added.

An acceptable contest entry, Dr. Conover pointed out, must provide a building plan not only for worship purposes, but also for religious education, fellowship and recreational activities, pastoral and administrative work. He said the designated church must be one which serves 150 or more members.

Students submitting contest entries, Dr. Conover said, will be required to prepare a church building program which states exact requirements. These requirements, he added, include statistics on the surrounding community, as well as a detailed plan showing dimensions and contour of the church site.

The contest, which is awarding cash prizes amounting to $500, closes June 1st.

Rural Program in Alabama

• "An eight-day rural church survey . . . is the answer to many of the problems facing the rural church," wrote John W. Wells in a recent issue of *Southern Baptist Home Missions.* The survey and enlargement program reported by Mr. Wells was conducted in Marshall County, Alabama, where thirteen churches participated. Some of the items studied were budgets, church buildings and grounds, and evangelism.

More time is needed to determine the number of practical results from this survey, but much progress has already been made in the right direction.

National Conference on Rural Health

• The Council on Rural Health of the American Medical Association held its seventh annual National Conference in Denver, Colorado, February 29-March 1. About 700 leaders in medicine, farm organizations and education attended. The theme of the Conference was "Help Yourself to Health."

Dr. John W. Cline of San Francisco, president of the American Medical Association, spoke at the preliminary session, stressing the need for a program of education for farm people which would include proper dietary habits, improved sanitation, immunization against such preventable diseases as smallpox, diphtheria and typhoid, construction of more and better hospitals in rural areas which need them and are able to support them, and home nursing and first aid classes.

Dr. F. S. Crockett of Lafayette, Inc., chairman of the A.M.A. Council on Rural Health, outlined the national rural health program. He stressed the doctor's role in the development of state and local health councils. He said that if a health council is formed of representatives of all groups, its deliberations reflect a broad section of public opinion and experience.

Other speakers at the Conference included Dr. Kenneth Kaisch of Philip, S. D., who gave rules which will help a small town to get and hold a doctor; Chester G. Starr, director of the rural health service, Missouri Farm Bureau Federation; Dr. Fred C. Hubbard of North Wilkesboro, N. C.; Edgar J. Fisher, Jr., director of the Virginia Council of Health and Medical Care; Dr. John R. Hodges, chairman of the Michigan State Medical Association committee on rural health service; Dr. Charley J. Smyth, director of the University of Colorado's graduate and post graduate medical education; Allan Kline, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Chicago, Ill., and Dr. Albert C. Yoder, 85-year-old doctor of Goshen, Ind., who was voted the "General Practitioner of the Year" by his medical colleagues in 1951.

Challenge of the Rural Nonfarm Population to the Churches*

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

• Rural nonfarm people are those living outside cities but who are not farm operators. They live in villages under 2,500 population, in hamlets and on farms where they rent or own only the house and yard. They are also those persons in rural-located institutions, summer camps, motels, tourist camps and work project settlements. They include the residents in the "line" settlements along the country highways leading out from the cities and the "hut-dwellers" along the roads in the hinterlands.

The importance of the rural nonfarm population is shown by their numbers. There are 31,000,000 of them among the 150,000,000 Americans. They are fifty-seven per cent of the rural population.

Characteristics

Rural nonfarm is the fastest growing section of the population in the United States. Once the rural population consisted of only farmers and the villagers who served them with markets. Now there are numerous rural nonfarm population types. Today rural nonfarm people are more numerous than farmers and they are increasing while farmers are declining in relative numbers.

Some rural nonfarm people use rural areas for residence but may not be at home there. They may or may not feel themselves a part of the rural community. Settled villagers and others of long and permanent residence will be active rural community members but commuters, line-dwellers and migrant laborers may have their loyalties elsewhere. The rural church has difficulty in trying to deal with those whose place of work outside the community holds most of their interests.

Cities are contributing to the rural nonfarm population. Improved transportation has made it possible for more and more people to live outside the cities where they commute to work. The development of the amenities such as electricity, running water and community activities has increased the desire to live in rural areas. Thus, rural electrification and communication bring rural nonfarm people to the constituency and responsibility of the rural church. Life is made easier for the rural nonfarm resident but more difficult for the rural church.

Composition

Village people in centers of less than 2,500 population are the largest aggregate of the rural nonfarm mass. In 19,000 villages and many smaller places small town and hamlet business men and their families are the most important element, both numerically and economically. These are among the rural nonfarm people for the church to reach and with whom it must work.

Commuters among the rural nonfarm population are increasing in numbers. These people work in the nearby city and reside in the rural community, either in the village or on farms where others till the soil.

Retired people are found among the rural nonfarm population. The rural church has the problem in many instances of obtaining the participation of retired people. A high percentage of retired people in the local rural population may affect the mood of the church and community in terms of conservative, as against progressive, action. Under such circumstances, leadership of the rural church may find it necessary to fight to be a live and useful institution.

"Hut-dwellers" are a small class of rural nonfarm people. Many of these "huts" were established during the depression in the 1930's by low-income industrial workers seeking escape from city rents.

"Line-dwellers" are those who live along the highways leading out from

* Adapted from a paper read at the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Lancaster, Pa., 1951.

the larger cities. Usually they commute into the city for work. Some of them have roadside businesses such as filling stations, small restaurants, garages for repairing cars and other roadside stands. This rural aggregate is generally without a community. They live under the influence of the city but are not of it.

Migrants are farm laborers in seasonal crop periods. Their handicaps are many, including their status as strangers, homeless and poor. They are probably the least secure rural nonfarm group. The church will need to do some social engineering to enlist these people.

The Task

The task of the church with the rural nonfarm population is more difficult than it once was. Stratification and divergent mobility status make it difficult for the church to reach and serve many rural nonfarm persons. Let the rural church be especially alert about moving peoples—the newcomers in the community.

It is obvious that the town and country church must get acquainted with the local rural nonfarm people. Every family in the community must be listed. Note must be taken of the nonfarm people. It is most important to have the names but it will be helpful to know something of the class and mobility status of the rural nonfarm persons. Is the church ready and willing to receive the rural nonfarm families who differ from them in social status or who are strangers, or both?

The Christian gospel must be preached in its highest terms and with the duty of the church to the rural nonfarm population in mind. The specific rural nonfarm situation of any parish and community must be faced by the church people in the light of the gospel and of Christian brotherhood.

A Prayer

Speak, Lord, in the stillness
While I wait on Thee;
Hushed my heart to listen
In expectancy.

—*Anonymous*

World Needs More Food

• U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan told the sixth world conference of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome that the world's people need not only more food production but also better distribution of food supplies among nations.

Mr. Brannan firmly committed the U.S. to the method of furnishing technical assistance to the under-developed nations.

Since World War II, food production in the world has increased only 9% in volume, while population has increased 12%, Norris E. Dodd, FAO director-general, told the organization's council. Most of the people of the world who were hungry in the prewar years are hungrier now, said Dodd, while those who had enough "have as much as they had before."

He believed, however, that the "nations seem at last to be preparing for a genuine large scale world war against want. I am confident that such a war can be won."

New Chief of Soil Conservation

• Dr. Robert M. Salter has succeeded Dr. Hugh Bennett as Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Born at Huntington, Ind., Dr. Salter grew up in northwestern Ohio. Even as a youngster he had a strong affinity for soil and growing things. After he had acquired his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Ohio State College, he taught agricultural chemistry there, and later directed soil research in Ohio. He cooperated closely with the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S.D.A. and had a hand in the establishment of the first erosion experiment station in the United States, and in the first soil conservation demonstration project.

Dr. Salter is a Presbyterian. He lives in Maryland (about thirty-five miles from Washington, D. C.) on an historic 150-acre place that was part of an original 1,000-acre grant to the first governor of Maryland.

The Local Broadcaster

CHARLES H. SCHMITZ

• We pay our respects to the local broadcaster. He is a very significant person, particularly in religious broadcasting.

The local religious broadcaster knows his community and is known by it. He speaks through the joys and sorrows of his people, their occupations, their regional way of life. It is a case of neighbor speaking to neighbor.

To know the broadcaster and to be known by him—that is radio communication at its best. The local broadcaster has that opportunity. Many a local religious broadcaster has been introduced to families who heard him first on the radio. Listeners appreciate hearing ministers from their own community. There is a "native" quality about it.

The local church experiences growth far more through local broadcasting than through network broadcasting. The local church is the fellowship of believers represented by the broadcaster. He speaks for the local "inlet" (not "outlet") to which the listener may become attached.

It is because the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches believes in the importance of the local broadcaster that institutes and workshops are held all over this country and Canada to help him do a better job and reach the listeners more effectively. If you are interested, write to the Broadcasting and Film Commission at 220 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y., for more information.

Lutheran Rural Church Institute

REGINALD W. DEITZ

• The Board of American Missions of the United Lutheran Church recently held a Rural Church Institute at Toledo, Ohio. For a day and a half synodical presidents, mission secretaries and representative rural pastors discussed the characteristics, problems and opportunities of country congregations in the United Lutheran Church.

In the opening address Dr. Fred Wiegman of Akron said that the church's present task is to permeate the whole community with the gospel of Jesus Christ. How to do this, how to help the rural church keep its spiritual integrity and hold it to its evangelic task was the underlying concern of the Institute. There was an undertone of genuine and ungrudging respect for the dignity of life in rural America and the country minister's high challenge.

How to rehabilitate a run-down and all-but-dead rural parish was discussed. The Rev. H. E. Poff (Virginia) and Dr. Earl Rahn (Philadelphia) led the group in considering the program of Parish Education in the rural church of limited facilities.

Liveliest part of the program, it was generally agreed, was the round table discussion of which Dr. Fry was chairman.

Prominent in the discussion at almost every point was the assumption that the key to better rural churches is a finer rural ministry and that this will not come to pass until country churches lose their inferiority complexes, recognize their resources and opportunities, and begin to pay salaries which will attract and keep the best type of leadership.

The general chairman of the Institute was Dr. Karl Henry of the staff of the Board of American Missions. The Rev. H. H. Mahl (New York) opened each session with devotions.

Southern Baptist Rural Churches

• According to the latest *Southern Baptist Handbook* there are 23,146 rural Southern Baptist churches. 10,432 are full-time churches, with 8,280 resident pastors.

The Southern Baptist rural church program began in 1946. Progress has been made but some of the goals desired are a resident pastor living on every rural field; a pastor's home for every rural field; no one-room church buildings.

The Rev. Arthur House Stainback, rural church leader and pastor of Stoney Creek Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., has written about "The Rural Church—Its Challenge and Place" in the January issue of *Southern Baptist Home Missions,* published by Southern Baptist Convention, 161 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta 3, Ga. Mr. Stainback feels strongly that the rural church is the "foundation builder," and that "one of America's greatest needs is for more small communities."

In the same issue of *Southern Baptist Home Missions,* Mrs. Jessie Miller tells how Arletta Campbell Robbins, a teacher, helped to build a church in the Virginia mountains. By much hard work, which has included teaching, visiting, and organizing lay leaders, Miss Campbell (now Mrs. Robbins) has been instrumental in building this church, which "now has a full-time pastor whom it pays $250 per month."

The Macedonia Baptist Church of Winston County, Miss., recently received a citation of merit for outstanding community service from the Mississippi State College. The pastor, E. D. Estes, tells about this church and the many improvements to make it attractive, in the same issue of *Southern Baptist Home Missions.* He says, "rural churches can be revived and greatly improved if they are willing to put forth the effort and if they have a trained pastor with sufficient time and vision to lead in the work."

Prayer

Oh! that mine eye might closed be
To what concerns not me to see;
That deafness might possess my ear
To what concerns not me to hear:
That truth my tongue might ever tie
From speaking words of vanity:
That no vain thought might ever rest
Or be conceived within my breast;
So that in deed and word and thought,
Glory may unto God be wrought.
But what are wishes? Lord, mine eye
Is fixed on Thee, to Thee I cry!
Cleanse, Lord, and purify my heart
And make it clean in every part;
And when 'tis pure, Lord keep it so,
For that is more than I can do.

—Thomas Ellwood

(Quoted in *The World's Great Religious Poetry*)

Rural Life Sunday, May 18, 1952

• Rural Life Sunday will again be observed on Rogation Sunday, the fifth Sunday after Easter, May 18th.

This year's order of service was prepared by Dr. George Kerr, Director of Town and Country Church Work for the United Presbyterian Church.

Copies may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board or from the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $2.60 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

Your Harvest Festival

• The Department of Printing and Distribution of the National Council will again have available by August 15th the annual Order of Service for a Harvest Festival. It will be so arranged that it will be ready for use by a congregation.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Seedtime and Harvest

• "Seedtime and Harvest" is a new 16mm, sound, color film, now available for use by local churches. The film has been produced for the Town and Country Church Department of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. It depicts the story of the Cooperative Parish Plan used in three Presbyteries in Virginia. The filming is exceptionally good with beautiful nature scenes and the narration and musical background are most effective.

"Seedtime and Harvest" can be secured on a maintenance fee basis of $1.00 from the Department of Promotion of the Board of Church Extension, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., 605 Henry Grady Building, Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. James Carr of the Town and Country Church Department of this denomination makes three suggested uses of the film:

1. With pastors and leaders from groups of rural churches, followed by discussion of details in establishing the Cooperative Parish.

2. With pastors and elders at a regular meeting of presbytery, followed by discussion of details of the Cooperative Parish program.

3. With groups in urban churches, to enlist interest in and support of the rural church program.

"A Wonderful Life"

• The new film, "A Wonderful Life," spearpoint of the campaign for reaffirmation of Christian faith, has been shown in the majority of the 22,000 local churches of the participating denominations. It is now being released through The Religious Film Association, 220 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y., for use by the churches which did not participate in the original campaign.

"A Wonderful Life" was produced by the Protestant Film Commission in Hollywood with a professional cast headed by James Dunn. The story was taken from real life. Henry Wood (James Dunn) is a small-time business man in a typical American town. He was the friendly sort who was always loaded with the church and community offices that take time and effort but give no glory. But in this service, in his quiet sacrificial gifts, and in his devotion to family and church, Henry Wood found a deep inner satisfaction. Only at his death did his friends—and even his family—realize that his was a "wonderful life."

"A Wonderful Life" runs 45 minutes and is available from most denominational and local film libraries, including those of The Religious Film Association, for a rental fee of ten dollars.

Growing Edge

• "There is a 'growing edge of the church.' It is found in the work missions and churches of widely differing ecclesiastical and theological traditions. It is found in many countries. The church is growing numerically, as well as in other ways equally important."

These words introduce a study of the experiences of many missionaries, entitled *The Growing Edge of the Church,* compiled by Raymond A. Dudley, published by Agricultural Missions, Inc., 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at 50 cents a copy. It is a most significant "record of experience."

The booklet grew out of a simple inquiry into the Christian movement in the lands of the Younger Churches. From Werner G. Marx, a Moravian in Honduras, from Merle L. Davis of the Friends in Kenya Colony, from John Patterson, Methodist of India, to select only a few names at random, have come these narratives with many accents and emphases that Mr. Dudley then summarizes in part as follows:

"Deep religious experience. This is the root of the matter. Apart from the spirit of the living Christ working in the souls of individuals and among groups of people, there is no 'growing edge' nor can there be.

"Bible study. A vast amount of Bible study is going on. Sometimes it is through a faithful teacher of a Bible class. Sometimes it is in an extensive system carefully organized and supervised to operate over a wide area through paid workers or through volunteers. Sometimes it is through a song memorized and taught by one illiterate to another. The methods differ, and the degrees of thoroughness differ widely too.

"Lay evangelism. Converts are winning new converts '. . . the best man to win another is one who "sits where he sits" . . . the convict best wins other convicts. Where such converts are genuinely converted, given definite responsibilities, and not overshadowed by paid workers, there are unlimited possibilities.'

"Group movements—the 'blood line.' To a degree that would astonish western Christians who have not lived among the Younger Churches, numerical growth takes place by families, tribes, villages, and caste units. In particular the movement spreads along the 'blood line.'

"Powerful influence of individuals. One deeply-converted village layman is worth his weight in gold. Sometimes it is a woman who plays an important part in establishing the Christian movement.

"Indigenous ways of working. Frequently missionaries have adapted their ways of working to the customs of the country. This is a potent factor in winning and holding converts.

"Work in rural areas. While there are exceptions, in the vast majority of cases *striking numerical growth is found in the rural areas.* There people are open to influence and less subject to secularizing forces.

"Self-support. There is overwhelming evidence that self-support is possible, that it is desirable, and that it strengthens the work. If permitted and encouraged to do so from the start, even very poor people can and do provide places of worship that satisfy them and maintain, in one way or another, the persons who provide spiritual ministration."

Mr. Dudley has gone beyond summary to suggest "implications" which involve the revitalization of some of the institutions, more effective program and planning, and the maximum effort in the places where experience indicates the maximum results are likely to be achieved.

American Protestantism in Pennsylvania

• The heart of Protestantism in America is not in New York or Chicago or any of the big places of America. It is in a little valley deep in the hinterland of Pennsylvania, according to Howard Whitman, author of the article, "What is a Protestant?" in the April issue of *Pageant*.

Whitman, who, strangely enough, is best known for his hard-hitting exposés on crime in America, was given an assignment by *Pageant* to find God in America. Because the majority of Americans belong to Protestant denominations, Whitman set out to discover what Protestants stand for, to find the heart of Protestantism.

The strength of Protestantism, claims Whitman in *Pageant*, is the small towns and country churches. In the valley of Pennsylvania's Wyalusing Creek, in the villages of Stevensville, Rushville and Camptown, Pennsylvania, each with populations of around 20, he found the true spirit of American Protestantism.

"Religion is a way of life here," said a 16-year-old girl who tends the general store in Stevensville. "I like it because people like each other." Her minister put it another way. "The heart of religion is love," he said, "and it's love when your neighbor has a hole in his shoe and your foot is cold."

Audio-Visual Workshops

• Workshops designed to help pastors and lay workers improve their use of movies, filmstrips and recordings in church programs will be held in eight centers across the nation during the coming year. These are being sponsored for the second year by the National Council of Churches in cooperation with local and state church councils.

Details may be procured from your state council of churches or from the National Council of Churches' Department of Broadcasting and Films, 220 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y.

Food and International Tension

• The demand from Europe and Asia for grain has resulted in an increase of exports of grain from the United States from less than 3,000,000 tons per year, prior to World War II, to over 15,000,000 tons during the past few years, it was stated by Fred. J. Rossiter, Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in an address at the North Dakota Agricultural College.

World figures on food production and per capita consumption are not precise. In several areas of the world, "it is undoubtedly true that the volume of food available per capita is not as large as it was prior to World War II."

Meanwhile there are great awakenings among the peoples of the so-called under-developed countries of the world. These countries are calling for technical assistance, so that they can "do a better job of farming, so they can raise their standard of living." One result is "Point Four," or technical assistance, or technical cooperation, whereby we "share our knowledge, our improved varieties, our research technicians, our system of extension service, and our knowledge of the use of insecticides and fertilizers."

As for the relation of these efforts to increase production abroad to our own high level of exports, it is evident that in the long run these demands abroad can only be maintained if the importing nations can earn the dollars with which to pay for them.

Drawing by Donald Sprout

The Task of the Rural Church*

DONALD W. ZIMMERMAN

• This is Rural Life Sunday. By happy coincidence our Parish Rally falls on the same day that churches throughout the country are giving thanks to God for the blessings which rich soil and good growing conditions have bestowed upon us.

The day was first observed nationally in 1929. The roots of observance go back, however, to the early centuries of Christian history. Deep in the consciousness of rural people is the conviction that if God does not bless the sowing there will be no harvest. Man may prepare the soil. He may select and sow good seed. But "God giveth the increase."

Rogation

By 475 A.D., Bishop Maretus, Bishop of Vienne, in Gaul, had dedicated the use of the three Rogation days preceding the Day of Ascension to prayers asking God's blessing upon the fruits of the earth. In 511 A.D. the days were observed throughout all of France. In 747 A.D., the Church of England adopted the use of these days for a similar purpose. Before the close of the eighth century the day had been adopted by the Church of Rome. Since then, the fifth Sunday after Easter has been set aside for an emphasis on rural life.

In our observance today we have asked God to bless the work our hands are doing. We have recognized that if we are to have a harvest in the fall it will come of God's gracious providence for his children. We have consecrated the work of plowing and sowing. We have dedicated our lives to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We now turn our thoughts to the rural church. It is important that we do so. It must be the channel by which we can all grow into the fullness of Christ. It is not enough that the ritual of the church be used for gaining material blessings for ourselves and for our people. Out of our churches must come the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, which will sanctify all of life. This is what Paul was praying for in his prayer for the church at Ephesus.

Responsibility

It is the task of the church to be a sort of funnel through which God can pour His Spirit into every person. When one is full of God, two things happen: First, personal life is enriched. Second, the fullness runs over. It touches others. It ministers to the people of the world. The Church of Christ has the two-fold obligation, then, of enriching personal life and spilling over to enrich the world.

City congregations have the responsibility for ministering, first of all, to the people of the city. As they labor in the name of Christ the urban centers of population will be touched by the overflow of His love. "Where cross the crowded ways of life" will become "the city of our God."

In like manner, the rural churches are obligated to work among the people of the countryside. In a sense, ours is the more important task. Without wishing to belittle the tremendous task of urban congregations I want to state that it is my conviction that rural churches, if they do their task well, can be the leavening force—the yeast—by which the entire nation can know the love of Christ.

Let me illustrate what I mean. For generations the rural families of America have supplied, in addition to the raw materials of food and clothing, the youth for our towns and cities. Out of our homes and through our schools and churches march the army of young men and women who are to become the laborers, the secretaries, the clerks, the teachers and the preachers for our cities.

Foundations

This city-ward movement, then, is true not only in relation to our corn and wheat, our cattle and hogs, but also of our boys and girls. Herein lies the reason why I believe that the rural church has the more important task. Unless the young families now living in the city take God with them they are not apt to find him there.

One task of the rural church is to fill our youth full of God's grace so they may overflow into the stream of urban life and make it Christian too.

But there are other aspects of our jobs. As we till our soil, as we make our homes, while we earn a living for ourselves, we, too, must be so filled with the Spirit of Christ that our daily acts shall be leavened with the gospel of love. If "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith," our community relationships will be improved, our farms will be better cared for. Young people will look at the lures of the city, but many will return to farm and town, content to serve the Lord in their "old home town."

Churches, like people, cannot enjoy the fullness of God without strong, spiritual foundations. Unless our churches become channels of God's grace to ourselves and our communities we will most certainly fail.

Christian brethren, rural America is losing its soul. Only the Christian Church can save us. For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

The task of the rural church is to bring people to the feet of Christ that they may learn of Him and be made whole in body and soul.

* From a sermon at a Parish Rally on Rural Life Sunday.

Annual Meeting of the Rural Life Association

• Dr. Daryl M. Parker, Hollansburg, Ohio, former medical missionary in China and Puerto Rico, was elected Chairman of the Rural Life Association at the annual meeting, held at Earlham College on March 22, 1952. He succeeds Ernest E. Mills, farmer, Cambridge City, Indiana, who had been chairman for the past five years. Ernest Mills and Ralph Delk, Arcanum, Ohio, vice-chairmen; Mrs. Louise M. Cain, Economy, Indiana, recording secretary; William Wildman, Richmond, Indiana, treasurer; and Paul Turner, Richmond, Indiana, assistant treasurer, were the other officers elected.

Stanley Hamilton was chosen as executive secretary for another year.

The following persons were elected to the R.L.A. Board for a term of three years: Louise M. Cain, Economy, Indiana; John Brenneman, R.F.D., Lima, Ohio; Silas J. Smucker, R.F.D., Rensselaer, Indiana; Paul Phillips, R.F.D., Goshen, Indiana; James Terrell, New Vienna, Ohio; Sumner A. Mills, R.R. 7, Indianapolis, Indiana; Robert Lumpkin, Losantville, Indiana; Mrs. Charles Weybright, Syracuse, Indiana. —Stanley Hamilton

Rural Life Program at Manchester College

• An emphasis on rural life will be instituted at Manchester College beginning this fall, President V. F. Schwalm announced following a meeting of the Rural Life Association, March 29, 1952.

A gift of three to four thousand dollars per year for the next five years will finance most of the program. This amount has been donated by Mr. and Mrs. I. E. Weaver of Huntington, Indiana.

During its initial year the emphasis will take the form of non-technical college courses, lectures by rural leaders, visitation in farm homes, and establishment of library and reference materials, the president stated.

—Stanley Hamilton

Audio-Visual Workshop

• An international workshop in Audio-Visual Education will be held at Green Lake, Wisconsin, August 31-September 5, 1952. Sponsored by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches, this workshop is planned to provide time and resources, both of materials and leadership, for assisting those who attend to work out problems related to the use of audio-visuals in Bible teaching, program planning and administration, and the cultivation and development of leadership.

For information regarding accommodations and rates, write to the Department of Audio-Visual and Radio Education, National Council of Churches, 79 East Adams Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

Woman's Club Finances Church

• The Deep Springs Baptist Church in Anderson County, Tennessee, was built largely through the efforts of a rural woman's club which voluntarily raised $3,000 for the project. The members of the club will continue raising money "for new pews and for landscaping," writes Laura Lane in a recent issue of *Country Gentleman*.

Sources of revenue for this project included a "friendship quilt," a talent show, bake sales, parties, individual gifts, greeting cards, etc.

The Mountain View Home Demonstration Club has also started a community park and "carries on a full demonstration program," as well as a soils-testing program.

"The Hire of the Laborers"

• The Council for Social Action of the Congregational-Christian Churches has published a leaflet bearing the above title which details the salaries and needs of migratory labor.

The leaflet, which is designed for the use of ministers, Sunday school teachers and group discussion leaders, tells how migratory workers may best be served. It may be procured from the Rev. Shirley E. Greene, Merom, Indiana, for 3 cents per copy, or $1.50 per hundred copies.

From Correspondence

• The happy and profitable days spent at Green Lake in the Interdenominational Rural Pastors' School last year are often pleasurably recalled.

"During this past year we tried a new venture among our men. We rented fifteen acres of land, prepared the soil, planted sweet corn under contract to the local canning factory, cultivated and harvested it all with cooperative donated help. Our men really enjoyed doing the work. About fifty men shared in the venture. We grossed about $650, nearly $500 of which was applied to our church debt.

"We have a men's chorus, composed mostly of farmers, who meet regularly in a little country school house for rehearsal. The men have sung at the Wisconsin State Fair each year for the past ten years. They have appeared on the radio several times and have given many concerts in churches in southern and central Wisconsin."

—Rev. Harvey Schoss
Route 1, Sauk City, Wis.

"I've been reading Town and Country Church with pleasure and profit since it started publication. I am interested in practically all the material in your publication, but especially in the articles touching farm ownership promotion by the churches.

"For some time I've been thinking that this promotion of farm ownership, instead of being done independently by church groups, should be done together by joint promotion of the churches, the chambers of commerce, the farm organizations and all the other groups interested in building strong rural communities."
—Geo. Nell

Co-op Parish Activities Service
Effingham, Illinois

"I think that Town and Country Church is doing an excellent job."
—Lauris B. Whitman

Book Review

Grandma Moses: My Life's History. Edited by Otto Kaller. Harper and Bros., New York. 1952. $3.50. With 16 Paintings in Full Color.

The first Thanksgiving Mrs. Moses remembers was during the Civil War. Recently, shortly after she was 91, she received a Social Security number, because she is one of the self-employed now covered by Old Age and Survivors' Insurance System.

Mrs. Moses, who lives at Eagle Bridge, N. Y. (not in Vermont, as some "authorities" say), began painting at age 76. She tells that she painted a bit as a child, using fruit juices for colors. Shortly before her husband died he expressed more than usual interest in her casual drawing.

Then when a doctor recommended less housework, Mrs. Moses started painting from memory, relying, she says, on a sort of unconscious influence. She still sits down at the easel without a very definite idea of what she will paint. The result has been a large number of primitives that have probably made her the most famous American painter of primitives in her day.

The cities of Europe and America have acclaimed her work. An art educator writes that no other painter of primitives has ever won fame so quickly in America.

These verbal sketches were written "a little today, a little yesterday." They reveal Mrs. Moses the countrywoman as well as the artist. They tell much about rural ways in language so brief and simple that few could imitate it. When Mrs. Moses was 12, she went out to work as "a hired girl." Her book speaks of the infinite kindness of the families that employed her. Before she was 20, in Northern New York, she never saw a doctor—her father doctored with roots and herbs.

Thirty days after Anna M. Robertson was married to Thomas Moses, the hired man, they had journeyed to a farm near Staunton, Va., "a strange land." They lived on farms there for twenty years, returning to Eagle Bridge, northeast of Troy.

Once this reviewer called on Mrs. Moses for a most rewarding conversation. Grandma Moses said somewhat sternly to me that she did not like people calling on her and then boasting about having seen her. This served as a restraint on my enthusiasm for a long while. Now that this autobiography has been published, all restraints on that feeling are renewed, and I say that Mrs. Moses has been an inspiration to me as to so many others.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, who lives at Arlington, Vermont, just across the border from Eagle Bridge, tells a delightful story about taking a young intellectual, who was sure he did not like primitives, to see Mrs. Moses and her paintings in her home. After a short while the young man was changed—he would rather have one of Grandma Moses' primitives than many famous paintings he could mention!

B. Y. L.

Selected Rural Fiction

COMPILED BY CAROLINE B. SHERMAN

1. Babson, Naomi Lane. *I am Lidian.* 311 pp. Harcourt, Brace and Co., N. Y. $3.00.

Another story of a pioneer woman but with a difference. Major and minor characters are clearly drawn by this experienced writer and are individual. Primarily, the theme is Lidian's integrity of personality despite many pressures and adverse episodes.

2. Budd, Lillian. *April Snow.* 317 pp. J. B. Lippincott Co., N. Y. $3.00.

Family life on a rather forbidding island off the coast of Sweden is made up of children of many attitudes knit together into a loyal and loving whole by one woman's personality whose worth is recognized by all except her husband and his friends. Through step-by-step progression we learn in detail of Swedish ways and customs. We see their handicrafts, hear their songs, attend their festivals. A religious accent is present throughout. (Selected by Family Reading Club.)

3. Giles, Henry. *Harbin's Ridge.* 233 pp. Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston. $2.75.

Although the leading family is moderately well to do, they are Kentucky mountaineers. Devotion and contentment seem to prevail, with two boys monopolizing attention. Powerful, sympathetic, and distinctive.

4. Holt, Felix. *The Gabriel Horn.* 221 pp. Dutton Co., N. Y. $3.00.

A clear-seeing frontier lad journeys from the hills of eastern Kentucky to those of the western part of his state, meeting crude but enlivening and colorful character and incidents all the way. He tells of it himself with the flavored vocabulary of his country and times.

5. Roy, Gabrielle. *Where Nests the Water Hen.* 251 pp. Harcourt, Brace & Co., N. Y. $3.00.

Plot is not necessary in this revealing translation of incidents on a remote island in northern Manitoba. Life, love, warmth, and humor, and graceful writing infuse every chapter whether the pages be about the teeming enthusiastic family of French-Canadian children and their vibrant job-giving mother, or about the teachers the Government sends to them alone, or about the old, unworldly, but shrewd and much-beloved Capuchin priest.

6. Walker, Mildred. *The Southwest Corner.* 144 pp. Harcourt, Brace, and Co., N. Y. $2.00.

In a few chapters, "The Southwest Corner" gives a heart warming depth of insight. In her several rural novels, the author has exhibited ability to probe beneath the surface and disclose what she finds with imaginative understanding. This study of old age is deftly done and with a remarkable perception. New England as of today.

Chinese Prayers

- "O God, I am as one hungry for rice, parched as one thirsty for tea—fill my so empty heart."
- "Dear saving Lord, make me a bamboo pipe that I may carry living waters to nourish the dry fields of my village."